

Amendments to the Claims:

1-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the colorant is a fluorescent colorant and is present in an amount of about 0.05 percent by weight to about 2.5 percent by weight based on the total weight of the fiber.

9. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the colorant is a fluorescent colorant and is present in an amount of about 0.1 percent by weight to about 1 percent by weight based on the total weight of the fiber.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein said first and second polymeric components are each independently selected from the group consisting of polyolefins, polyesters, polyamides, polyacrylates, polystyrenes, polyurethanes, acetal resins, polyethylene vinyl alcohol, thermoplastic elastomers, polyacrylonitrile, polyaramids, cellulose and cellulose derivatives, and blends and co- and terpolymers thereof.

12. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprise the same polymer.

13. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 12, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises a polyamide polymer.

14. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 13, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises a polyamide polymer selected from the group consisting of nylon 6 and nylon 6,6.

15. (Previously presented) The fiber of Claim 12, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises an aromatic polyester polymer.

16. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 15, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises polyethylene terephthalate.

17. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 12, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises an aliphatic polyester polymer.

18. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 17, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises polylactic acid.

19. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 12, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises a polyolefin polymer.

20. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 19, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises polypropylene.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the colorant is a phosphorescent colorant selected from the group consisting of metal aluminate oxide, sulfides of zinc, calcium, strontium and cadmium, and complex sulfides of zinc and cadmium sulfide.

23. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 22, wherein said phosphorescent colorant is metal aluminate oxide, zinc sulfide or strontium sulfide.

24. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein said second polymeric component comprises a fluorescent colorant.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the core is concentrically located within the sheath.

27. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the core is eccentrically located within the sheath.

28-30. (Cancelled)

31. (Currently Amended) A sheath and core bicomponent fiber, comprising:

a sheath comprising a non-luminescent first polymeric component; and

a core comprising a second polymeric component, the second polymer component comprising at least one fluorescent or phosphorescent colorant;

wherein the core comprises less than about 20 percent of the cross-sectional area of the bicomponent fiber, wherein said fiber is selected from the group consisting of continuous filaments, staple fibers, spunbond fibers, and meltblown fibers.

32. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the colorant is a phosphorescent colorant and is present in an amount of about 1 percent by weight to about 15 percent by weight based on the total weight of the fiber.

33. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the colorant is a phosphorescent colorant and is present in an amount of about 5 percent by weight to about 15 percent by weight based on the total weight of the fiber.

34. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component are formed from the same polymer selected from the group consisting of nylon 6, nylon 6,6, polyethylene terephthalate, polylactic acid, and polypropylene.

35-38. (Cancelled)

39. (Previously presented) A fabric comprising a plurality of bicomponent fibers according to Claim 31.

40. (Previously presented) The fabric of Claim 39, wherein the fabric is selected from the group consisting of woven fabrics, knit fabrics, and nonwoven fabrics.

41. (Previously presented) An outdoor apparel or safety equipment article comprising a plurality of bicomponent fibers according to Claim 31.

42. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the sheath is multilobal.

43. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the core comprises less than about 15% of the cross-sectional area of the bicomponent fiber.

44. (Previously presented) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the core comprises about 10% to about 20% of the cross-sectional area of the bicomponent fiber.